

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In an encoding apparatus or method, variable-length encoding data is packetized by a packetizing format in which a header of a packet has an area for indicating a packet length and the range of values indicating the packet length is limited. Variable-length encoding data is input and the data length of the variable-length encoding data is detected. According to the detection result, the input variable-length encoding data is packetized within the packet-length maximum value which can be specified in the header.